

## Re-writing the Colonial Story in Mircea Eliade's *Maitreyi* and Maitreyi Devi's *Na Hanyate*

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This article discusses the relationship between reading and cultural stereotyping in two fictional writings that engage with the same biographical material. In 1933, Romanian writer Mircea Eliade published a semi-autobiographical novel, *Maitreyi (Bengal Nights)*, inspired by his recent experience as a student in an Indian university. Nearly forty years later, the echoes of this story reached Calcutta, prompting the response of the novel's protagonist, poet and human rights militant Maitreyi Devi, which appeared in 1971 as *Na Hanyate (It Does Not Die)*. These conflicting stories, beyond their individual significance, reflect problems of cultural representation – moving among a variety of different discourses, from Enlightenment rationalism and modernism to nationalism and feminism. The aim of my analysis is to highlight the different cultural discourses that are responsible for various shifts in the composition and interpretation of these texts, and implicitly contribute to their more adequate positioning within the context of world literature. [Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: [journal@transformativestudies.org](mailto:journal@transformativestudies.org) Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2013 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]

**KEYWORDS:** Mircea Eliade, Maitreyi Devi, Subaltern Cultures, World Literature, India, Romania.

### PRELIMINARIES

20<sup>th</sup> century researchers from various humanistic fields agree that, in the modern world, the encounter between two cultures can no longer take

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